

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Licensing Committee **DATE:** 4th November 2009

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WARD(S): **ALL**

PART I

FOR DECISION

MINIMUM SIZE OF VEHICLES TO BE LICENCED FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE

1. **Purpose of Report**

The Committee are asked to consider the recommendations regarding the size of prospective Hackney Carriage and Private Hire saloon vehicles as follows:

- (a) Any vehicle that is to be licensed by Slough Borough Council must not be below Committee approved Euro NCAP or European Classification groups.
- (b) Any vehicle that is presented for licensing by Slough Borough Council that does not meet these minimum standards will not be licensed.

2. **Recommendation to Council**

The Committee recommend to Council to approve the implementation of a new policy in respect of the minimum sizes to be met by Hackney Carriage and Private Hire saloon vehicles in that:

- (a) Any vehicle that is to be licensed by Slough Borough Council must be in the Euro NCAP or European Classification groups laid out in this report
- (b) Any vehicle that is presented for licensing by Slough Borough Council that does not meet these minimum standards, will not be licensed

3. **Key Priorities – Taking Pride in Slough and making a Difference to Communities and our Environment.**

Priority 1 – Creating safe, environmentally friendly and sustainable neighbourhoods.

Aims

- 1.3 Protect and enhance public health and well being

Licensing regulation directly contributes to the aim of protecting and enhancing public health and well being.

4. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

None.

(b) **Human Rights Act and other Legal Implications**

Articles 1, 6 and 8 of the Human Rights Act apply

Article 1 – states the every person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his or her possessions including, for example the possession of a licence.

Article 6 – that in the determination of civil rights and obligations every one is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law.

5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 On the 1st of August 2001, the Licensing Committee approved a policy that set out the minimum interior seating dimensions that must be met by all prospective Private Hire or Hackney Carriage vehicles
- 5.2 Since 2001 a the number of vehicle brands and models available to current and prospective drivers has obviously increased, with officers on occasion having to search the internet to find images of vehicle models that have not been licensed previously, as not all car makes and models are common in all countries and names for the same vehicle can differ by region.
- 5.3 Currently, should a prospective licence holder present for licensing, a vehicle which is of a make and model that Licensing Officers are unfamiliar with, Officers must take measurements of the interior dimensions to ascertain the vehicle's suitability and these results may be inaccurate.
- 5.4 If however the prospective licence holder has not yet purchased a vehicle, and wants to know if his intended purchase will be suitable, finding the correct interior dimensions can be very difficult and time consuming.
- 5.5 It is also worth noting that the suitability of a vehicle for Private Hire or Hackney Carriage licensing can be subjective, with the owner of the vehicle on occasions disagreeing with the Licensing Officers view that the vehicle is not fit for more than 3 adults.
- 5.6 Using an industry-wide recognised method of classifying passenger vehicle into categories and then choosing the groups that are suitable to be licensed, allows for clear and concise boundaries to be drawn. It also allows the Licensing Office to easily keep abreast with changes that are made to different vehicle manufacturers products.
- 5.7 Licensing Officers feel that the categories of vehicle listed in Appendix B, are suitable to be licensed as Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles, (this does not refer to or affect in any way, the Policy on wheelchair accessible vehicles).

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

None

7. **Conclusion**

The Committee are asked to approve the immediate implementation of the new Policy which stipulates the Euro NCAP or European Commission classification categories for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire saloon vehicles as follows:

- (a) Only those vehicles that fall into the following Euro NCAP categories; Large family, Executive, Small MPV*, Large MPV, Large Off-Road 4x4 (European Commission classification D, E, F M* and J**)
- (b) In respect of the small MPV categories, these vehicles shall only be licensed to carry four passengers
- (c) Only the Large Off-Road 4x4 vehicles shall be licensed in the J segment

8. **Appendices Attached**

- A Previous dimensions approved
- B Car Classification groups
- C Car Classification groups to be licensed

9. **Background Papers**

- 1. Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (As amended by the Transport Act 1985)